ASSIST Special Education Guidance Document

Kentucky Department of Education
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Introduction

This document is a compilation of the investigative questions and suggested activities from the KCMP Instruction Manuals for 2011-12. It is provided to districts as a support to their Comprehensive Improvement Planning Process. It is suggested that districts:

1) Review and analyze the data that is provided in the 2012 ASSIST Special Education Data spreadsheet and includes data for students with disabilities in the areas of: graduation rate, dropout rate, suspension rate, least restrictive environment, and successful transition rate.
2) Identify any areas where the district is performing below the target identified for the state on the State Performance Plan for special education.
3) Review investigative questions for areas of concern in order to determine the root cause for the district performance. It is not necessary to answer every investigative question. They are provided only as a guide to assist districts with their root cause analysis.
4) Identify activities to improve district performance in areas of concern. Suggested activities are provided, though not required, and may help stimulate district thinking.

CONTENTS

Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students with Disabilities

Investigative Questions

o Has the district run the Persistence to Graduation Tool?
o What patterns or trends did the district's Persistence to Graduation Tool data reveal?
o Is the district utilizing the Persistence to Graduation Evidence-Based Strategies Toolkit found at http://education.ky.gov/school/Pages/PtGT.aspx
o At what percentage rate is the district preparing students for college/career. (See rates at http://openhouse.education.ky.gov/HighSchoolGraduates.aspx
o Are the district's schools fully implementing the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) process?
o Is the district utilizing the Advising Toolkit found at http://education.ky.gov/educational/CCadv/ar/Pages/default.aspx

Regarding supports for academic progress:
o Are there patterns or trends in retention rates across grade levels? From school to school?
o Are there patterns or trends in the grades of students who dropped out?
o Did the students who dropped out advance from grade to grade with their peer groups?
o Were the students who dropped out retained? What grade(s)? How many times?
o Were the students who dropped out over-age for their grade levels?
o Of the students who dropped out, what percentage were in the regular class 80% or greater, 40-79%, and less than 40%?

Regarding supports for behavioral progress:
o Are there patterns or trends in behavior/suspension rates across grade levels? From school to school?
o Do the district's Policies and Procedures (e.g., Code of Conduct, Attendance Policies) or classroom-level rules have any unintended impact on the dropout rate of students with disabilities? For example:
  ▪ Are students suspended from school for relatively minor behavior incidents?
  ▪ Are students referred to the office or suspended from school for numerous unexcused absences or tardies?
  ▪ Are students referred to the office or to in-school suspension for relatively minor incidents?
  ▪ Do students assigned to in-school suspension continue to receive specially designed instruction and the opportunity to progress in the general curriculum?
o Were the students who dropped out referred to the office for behavior/discipline, placed in in-school suspension, placed in alternative settings, and or suspended out-of-school? Across grade levels? How many times?

Regarding supports for attendance:
- o Are there patterns or trends in attendance data across grade levels? From school to school?
- o Did the students who dropped out have a pattern of excessive absenteeism (10-18% of school year)?
- o Did the students who dropped out have patterns in absenteeism from grade to grade, month to month? Were the courts involved?

Regarding supports for extracurricular involvement:
- o Are there patterns or trends in extracurricular activity involvement across grade levels? From school to school?
- o Of the students who dropped out, what percentage were involved in extracurricular activities?

Regarding supports for parental involvement:
- o Are there patterns or trends in parental involvement across grade levels? From school to school?
- o Did the parents of students who dropped out attend or participate in ARC meetings?
- o Were the parents of students who dropped out involved in other parent activities (e.g., Individual Learning Plan involvement; parent-teacher conferencing)?

Regarding flagging systems for students at-risk of dropping out:
- o Does the district implement use of the Persistence to Graduation Tool and toolkit to target students at risk of not completing school?
- o Does the district implement other tools in addition to the Persistence to Graduation Tool to identify and intervene with students at risk of not completing school?

Suggested Activities

Regarding academic progress data and information:
- o Implement a mentoring/tutoring program. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/mentoring/tutoring
- o Implement individualized instructional strategies such as problem-based learning and reciprocal teaching, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, hands-on learning, journaling, projects, role play, simulation, and inquiry. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/individualized-instruction
- o Implement active learning strategies such as cooperative learning, learning styles theory, multiple intelligences theory, and project-based learning. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/active-learning

Regarding behavior/discipline data and information:
- o Implement an alternative schooling model. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/alternative-schooling
- o Implement strategies to improve culture and safe learning environments. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/safe-learning-environments
- o Implement a mentoring/tutoring program. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/mentoring/tutoring

Regarding attendance data and information:
- o Implement career and technical programming http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/career-and-technology-education-cte
- o Implement web-based learning strategies http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/career-and-technology-education-cte

Regarding extracurricular activity involvement data:
- o Implement service-learning teaching and learning strategies. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/service-learning
- o Provide after-school opportunities. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/after-school-opportunities

Regarding parental involvement data and information:
- o Increase opportunities for family engagement. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/family-engagement
- o Increase use of technology for communication with students and parents. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/educational-technology

Regarding flagging systems for students at-risk of dropping out.
- o Utilize the Persistence to Graduation Tool within Infinite Campus and the online Persistence to Graduation Evidence-Based Strategies Toolkit to target students who might be off-track for graduation
- o Implement use of other tools in addition to Persistence to Graduation Tool to identify and intervene with students who may be off-track for graduation.

Achievement for Students with Disabilities

Investigative Questions

- o What does novice reduction data look like?
- o Is the district or school tracking assessment trend line data on students with disabilities and nondisabled students from year to year?
- o Is assessment data for this indicator representative of the participation and performance levels in your region?
- o Has the district or school analyzed assessment data based on where students with disabilities receive services (i.e., collaborative classroom, resource, self-contained etc.)?
- o Have teachers been trained on the new IEP Guidance Document (May 2012)? http://education.ky.gov/specialed/excep/Pages/default.aspx
- o How does the district ensure teachers are using the IEP Guidance Document to write standards-based IEPs?

Regarding Core Content
- o Access to Core Content
  - Do all students have access to the core content and higher levels of instructional practices?
  - Do students with disabilities receive core instruction plus intervention (specially designed instruction designed to target the specific area of weakness).
  - Is there a focus on evidence-based interventions?
  - Is the district implementing a system of Response to Intervention?
  - What percentage of students have "reader" on their IEP?
  - What percentage of students utilized "reader" on the state reading assessment?
  - Are teachers knowledgeable of the five components of reading and how they interrelate? How do you know?
  - Do students receive high quality, evidence-based writing instruction? How do you know?
  - Do students receive high quality, evidence-based math instruction? How do you know?
- o Do all collaborative and resource classes have the same high level of instruction and higher order thinking skills as non-collaborative classes?
- o Does the district have a plan for evaluating the fidelity of core content implementation?
  - How is the fidelity of implementation of research-based programs assessed?
  - Who assesses the fidelity of implementation?
  - How often is program fidelity assessed?

Regarding Assessment
- How does the district ensure content being taught is aligned to Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS)?
- Do principals collect classroom assessments for review?
    - Do school administrators use the data to help teachers meet the needs of students (e.g., staff development, change curriculum, professional growth plans)?
    - Is feedback on classroom assessments given to individual teachers?

Regarding Instructional Practices
- How is individual student progress monitored? How frequently?
- Are the strongest teachers with the students who struggle the most?
- Has the district or school identified those students (by individual student not group) within the district and school who are not meeting benchmarks or NCLB targets?
- How do teachers differentiate instructional practices based on individual student need and ongoing progress monitoring?
    - Which instructional strategies do teachers use systematically with all students?
- Which research-based intervention strategies or programs do teachers use with targeted students?
- How do teachers use data to vary their instructional practices?
    - When there is a discrepancy between a student and peers, are students provided targeted instructional supports?
- Does the district engage in practices of tracking students by ability level?
    - Are all lower students tracked into the same classroom or classes throughout the day? Why?
    - Do teachers or staff have lower expectations for some students and instruct them differently?

Regarding Monitoring and Expectations
- Does district and school leadership know students by name who are not meeting benchmark or NCLB goals?
- Does district and school leadership monitor to ensure all teachers can identify students by name who are not meeting benchmark or NCLB goals?
- Does district or school leadership monitor classroom instructional practices to ensure teachers are varying strategies based on individual student need?
    - To what degree have teachers received training on implementation of selected research-based instructional practices?
    - Do teachers receive feedback on general principles of effective instruction such as high rates of engagement, frequent positive feedback, immediate error correction, opportunities for students to make active responses, etc.?

- Does the district have a coaching process in place to determine the extent to which teachers demonstrate effective instructional practices?
  - Does district and school leadership determine PD based on assessment data?
    - To what degree have teachers received training on applicable research-based curricular programs?
    - Are teachers accessing/using the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) and PD360?
    - To what extent is the district participating in Kentucky's Leadership Networks?
    - Has ongoing professional learning addressed the problem areas?
    - What other types of professional learning follow-up activities are implemented?
    - Is comprehensive and on-going professional learning in curriculum, instruction, measurement, and problem solving offered to staff as part of a continuous improvement process?

Regarding Individual Students
  - Does the district or school identify struggling students?
  - What criteria are used to determine if a student is struggling?
  - What is different about the way students are taught who have been identified as struggling?
    - Are the likely 'root causes' of the student's academic or behavioral difficulties (e.g., skill deficit, lack of motivation) determined and intervention strategies chosen that logically address those root causes?
  - Does the district or school identify areas where students are weak? Does the district or school identify student errors on the K-PREP?
  - Does the district or school identify students who are almost to apprentice, almost to proficient, or almost to distinguished so they give them the little extra they need to move up in performance level?
  - Are data analyzed at the student level to inform decision-making, etc.
  - What does leadership do with this information?
    - Are resources allocated to instructional staff based on student needs documented by progress monitoring data (e.g. staff with more needs have more resources)?
  - What are teachers expected to do with the information?
    - Do grade level teaching teams meet to discuss student progress and instructional changes on a systematic basis?

Suggested Activities

- Ensure teachers receive training on the IEP Development Guidance Document (May 2012)
  http://education.ky.gov/specialed/excep/Pages/default.aspx
- Monitor use of the IEP Development Guidance Document
- Provide support to ARCs regarding decision-making as it relates to accommodations
- Ensure teachers are familiar with and know how to access "A Guide to the Kentucky System of Interventions (2012) – KSI/RtI Guidance Document"
  http://education.ky.gov/educational/int/ksi/Pages/default.aspx
- Ensure teachers are familiar with and know how to access KSI Webinars.
  http://education.ky.gov/educational/int/ksi/Pages/KSIwebcasts.aspx
- Ensure that teachers understand and know how to access resources to support implementation of the KCAS in the context of highly effective teaching, learning and assessment practices.
  http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/docs/Pages/Characteristics-of-Highly-Effective-Teaching-and-Learning-(CHETL).aspx
- Actively participate as a district leadership team, including special education teachers, in Kentucky's Leadership Networks.
  http://education.ky.gov/school/Pages/Leadership-Networks---Deliverables.aspx
- Increase teacher access and use of CIITS/PD360.

Suspension Rates

Investigative Questions

Regarding General District Discipline Policies and Procedures:
- Does the district (and every school in the district) have a shared vision that values student diversity and supports the need for proactive, positive, instructional discipline approaches & positive behavior supports for all students?
- How does the District Code of Conduct relate to suspension rates? (i.e., do district "NO TOLERANCE" discipline policies create situations where individual needs of students with disabilities are not being adequately considered?)
  - Are students suspended from school for relatively minor behavior incidents?
  - Are students referred to the office or suspended for numerous tardies or unexcused absences?
  - Are students automatically suspended for certain behaviors, without consideration of unique individual needs and circumstances?
- Has the district examined and, as needed, revised district discipline policies and procedures?
- Do district policies, procedures and practices support the use of suspension only as a last resort?
- Do district policies, procedures & practices accurately reflect current IDEA discipline requirements?

Regarding Use of School-wide Positive, Proactive, Instructional Discipline Approaches:
- If the district or school has a suspension rate for students with disabilities that are unacceptably high, is it part of a pervasive problem for all students? (i.e., are general education student suspension rates also too high?)
- Were specific assessments of school culture and climate (i.e., culture/climate audits, cultural competence assessment) utilized in the district's schools that have high numbers of suspensions for all students or disproportionate suspension rates for students of minority and/or racial ethnic groups?
- Does the school staff have a shared vision that values student diversity and supports the need for proactive, positive, instructional discipline approaches and positive behavior supports for all students?
- Has the district/school provided ongoing training and job-embedded PD/support to all staff regarding the implementation of positive, proactive school-wide discipline initiatives, routines, and practices?
- Does a particular school (or the district) need to implement a sustained multi-year positive behavior supports initiative to establish positive, proactive, instructional school-wide discipline routines and practices, to reduce the number of suspensions for all students?

Regarding Collection, Monitoring and Use of Discipline Data:

- o Do the district & every school have a proactive system in place for flagging students at risk for failure and/or suspension (e.g., a system which tracks and flags students who have a combination of too many absences, office discipline referrals, suspensions, mental health issues, failing grades, etc. when they reach pre-set thresholds or cumulative number of risk factors)?
- o Does each school (or the district) have a proactive system of intervention for students who are 'flagged' at risk for failure?
- o Is the district satisfied that suspension data collection is accurate? Have the consistency and accuracy of suspension data reporting methods in every school in the district been examined?
- o Does the district routinely monitor suspension data patterns to insure that administrative decisions correlate with district philosophy and guidance?
- o Does the district analyze suspension data (including specific discipline offenses) to plan needed professional learning and job-embedded training for the district, individual schools, administrators or staff?
- o Does each school collect, monitor and analyze discipline data at the school level, & disaggregate by grade level, teacher, student, time of day/year, number & types of offenses, etc.? Are these data summarized and shared with faculty on a routine basis? Are these data used to plan professional learning/ training for leaders & staff?

Regarding Administrator and Teacher Practices:

- o Are school administrators knowledgeable about how to differentiate discipline practices based on individual needs of students with disabilities?
- o Has the district provided training, coaching and support for school administrators regarding positive behavior supports, alternatives to suspension, and the unique needs of students with disabilities?
- o Are classroom teachers in both general and special education knowledgeable about how to differentiate discipline practices based on individual needs of students with disabilities?
- o Has the district provided training, coaching and support for classroom teachers in general and special education regarding positive behavior supports, alternatives to suspension, and the unique needs of students with disabilities?
- o Are successful practices shared among administrators as (PLC) colleagues?
- o Are successful practices shared among teachers as (PLC) colleagues?
- o What strategies and alternatives to suspension have proven successful across the district, region or state? Can these methods be implemented in schools with high suspension rates?
- o Do district leaders, administrators and teachers attend conferences like the summer 'Behavior Institute' to learn positive proactive behavior skills/ strategies?

Regarding Development, Revision, and Implementation of the IEP, FBA, and BIP:

o Are contents of the IEP (Present Levels, Behavior Objectives, Specially Designed Instruction) reviewed and revised throughout the year as necessary to address the specific behavior(s) associated with repeated suspension/ disciplinary action, that impedes the student's learning, or that of others?

o Is the IEP revised to include behavior instruction strategies, including social competence instruction, anger management, and specific behavior instruction practices and curricula which are designed to address the behavior of concern (which was associated with disciplinary action) such that the behavior violation does not recur? Or does the IEP ineffectively outline how to monitor the behavior to see if the student corrects the problem independently without any benefit of education, specially designed instruction or school assistance?

o Are Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) developed proactively to provide for effective analysis and targeted intervention of the student behavior, which is associated with repeated suspension, prior to reaching the total of 10 days suspension in a school year?

o Are FBA/ BIPs designed or reviewed and revised if necessary to address the disciplinary behavior violation so that it does not recur, regardless of whether the behavior related to the current suspension was determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability?

o Are targeted positive behavior interventions and supports designed, implemented and monitored on a routine basis and adjusted as needed (based on data) to insure progress toward behavior improvement goals of the student, which are related to preventing the need for further suspension/ disciplinary action?

Regarding IDEA Discipline Requirements and Procedural Safeguards:

o Do district policies, procedures & practices accurately reflect current IDEA discipline requirements around procedural safeguards?

o Do district policies, procedures & practices accurately reflect current IDEA discipline requirements around manifestation determination?

o Has the district considered doing proactive manifestation determination meetings and related FBA/ BIP/ IEP reviews for students who have been suspended >5 days, as a strategy for preventing a student from repeating behaviors of concern that risk further disciplinary actions which would extend beyond 10 days of suspension?

o Has the district provided training, support and protocols for 'manifestation determination' procedures and decisions?

o Has the district considered doing an investigation to include, but not be limited to, a record review of manifestation determination documentation, to understand what rationale is most routinely used for school level ARC decisions which conclude that the behavior of concern for suspension is "NOT A MANIFESTATION" of the student's disability?

o Do district policies, procedures & practices accurately reflect current IDEA definitions and related requirements around disciplinary change of placement?

Suggested Activities

Regarding General District Policies and Procedures:
- Adjust zero tolerance policies that may create situations where individual needs of students with disabilities are not being adequately considered.
- Revise student code of conduct to accurately reflect current IDEA discipline requirements.
- Develop procedures for implementation of a wraparound intervention team.
- Collaborate with school-based mental health, FRYSC and counselor, and other agencies.

Regarding Use of School-wide Positive, Proactive, Instructional Discipline Approaches:
- Conduct a school culture & climate audit.
- Create a school-wide discipline team.
- Develop an ongoing school (discipline) improvement process.
- Provide training and support for all staff on positive, proactive, instructional discipline approaches.
- Teach behavior expectations and social skills.

Regarding Collection, Monitoring and Use of Discipline Data:
- Review the school's Response to Intervention System, revising if appropriate.
- Develop and implement behavior screening and flagging systems.
- Create a targeted behavior intervention team.
- Implement a process of behavior data review and data-based decision making.

Regarding Administrator and Teacher Practices:
- Provide teacher training on classroom management and positive discipline strategies.
- Ensure that teacher PLCs review discipline data and discuss appropriate strategies.
- Provide ongoing staff mentoring and study groups.
- Clarify expectations for leadership related to discipline of students with disabilities.
- Provide professional development for administrators on proactive school-wide discipline and alternatives to suspension.
- Provide mentors for administrators for effective proactive and reactive strategies.
- Develop and implement small group behavior and social skill intervention

Regarding Development, Revision and Implementation of the IEP, FBA, and BIP:
- Implement procedures for reviewing and revising FBAs and BIPs, when appropriate.
- Review and revise IEPs to address behaviors of concern.
- Identify appropriate specially designed instruction for behavior issues and include on IEPs.
- Develop and implement individual student intervention plans and support.

Regarding IDEA Discipline Requirements/ Procedural Safeguards:

- o Institute procedures for conducting early proactive manifestation determination meetings for students who have been suspended five or more days as a strategy for preventing a student from repeating behaviors of concern.
- o Provide training for district personnel on manifestation determination procedures and decisions.
- o Review district policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they accurately reflect current IDEA definitions and related requirements around disciplinary change of placement.

Least Restrictive Environment

Investigative Questions

Regarding district policies:
- Are there any local regulations or policies in place that promote the use of separate schools/facilities?
- What local policies promote inclusion?
- What local funding formulas promote the use of separate schools/classes/facilities?
- Are there special school or district projects targeted to address least restrictive environment in the district or specific problem schools?
- What is the result of the implementation of these special projects?
- Has the district examined and, as needed, revised least restrictive environment determination policies, procedures and practices?
- Is a full continuum of placement options available in the district?
- What collaboration exists within the district for having common goals and strategies for least restrictive environment?
- What projects that promote inclusion have been implemented? What data are available on whether these projects resulted in the implementation of the intended practices?

Regarding Response to Intervention:
- Is there a fully-functioning Response to Intervention system?
- Were students with disabilities considered when this framework was developed?
- Is there collaboration (not co-teaching but collaboration) between teachers providing intervention and teachers providing Specially Designed Instruction?

Regarding general education classroom support:
- Are appropriate modifications being provided in the general education classroom? How do you know? What is done to support a teacher struggling to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities?
- Are general education teachers able to differentiate instruction and provide accommodations so that students with disabilities can be successful in the regular classroom? How do you know? What is done to support a teacher struggling to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities?
- How does the district address professional learning regarding the following:
  - Access to the general education curriculum,
  - Differentiated instruction,
  - Flexible learning environments, and
  - Universal design for learning?
- How has the district implemented policies and practices related to the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS)?

Regarding following appropriate procedures for determining Least Restrictive Environment:
- o Have contributing factors that may lead to inappropriate least restrictive environment placement been identified?
- o What resources are in place for schools, teachers and other staff pertaining to least restrictive environment decisions? What resources are needed?
- o Is regular class always considered as the first placement option?
- o What are district and school staff learning about least restrictive environment and inclusion in their in-service programs? How does the district determine the effectiveness of these programs?
- o Is the district monitoring least restrictive environment procedures throughout the year?
- o What are the enforcement actions taken by the district for findings of not following least restrictive environment procedures?

Regarding documentation of Least Restrictive Environment:
- o Has staff been adequately trained in how to accurately document least restrictive environment so that data are accurate?
- o Are records regularly reviewed to ensure accurate documentation of least restrictive environment?

Regarding Parent and Family Involvement:
- o How does the district invite and inform parents and families about least restrictive environment practices at the district, school, and individual levels?
- o How do parents and families participate in monitoring and improvement activities around least restrictive environment and access to the general education curriculum?
- o What mechanisms are in place at the district and school levels to promote communication and participation of a broad and diverse group of parents and families?
- o How is parent participation in the Admissions and Release Committee and placement decision facilitated? Is this facilitation working to engage parents? Why or why not?

Suggested Activities

Regarding district policies:
- o Review district policies or practices to identify those that do not support least restrictive environment. Develop a plan for revising those policies or practices.
- o Implement a district or school project to promote appropriate inclusionary practices.

Regarding Response to Intervention:
- o Assemble a district team to review current Response to Intervention practices and develop a plan for improving areas found to be deficient.

o Develop a plan for interventionist and special education teachers providing specially designed instruction to work together to ensure highly effective intervention is being provided for all struggling students.

o Provide training for staff.
o Visit other schools/districts that have successful Response to Intervention systems.

Regarding general education classroom support:
o Provide training for general education teachers on differentiated instruction.
o Examine the master schedule to ensure that collaborative teachers have sufficient common planning time.
o Provide co-teaching training along with developing a plan for effective coaching of teachers who are co-teaching.
o Provide training for administrators on how to support and monitor instruction of diverse learners.

Regarding following appropriate procedures for determining Least Restrictive Environment:
o Provide training for Admissions and Release Committee members on procedures for determining least restrictive environment.
o Conduct regular checks to ensure that procedures are being followed for least restrictive environment determination

Regarding documentation of Least Restrictive Environment:
o Provide training on accurate documentation of least restrictive environment
o Develop and implement a process for monitoring accuracy of least restrictive environment documentation.

Regarding Parent and Family Involvement:
o Provide training for parents about least restrictive environment
o Monitor parent involvement in Admissions and Release Committee meetings and implement district procedures increasing the number and types of contacts made to parents to encourage their participation.

Successful Transition Rates

Investigative Questions

Regarding District Promotion of Awareness of Employment and Educational Opportunities in Region:
- How often does the Regional Interagency Transition Team (RITT) meet, and what suggestions do they make?
- Is school a part of local Chamber of Commerce (or other local business group)?
- Are customized employment personnel utilized?
- What postsecondary educational opportunities are available in the region?
- Are students prepared to live away from home to further their education, if necessary?

Regarding District Promotion of Information to Parents and Students Regarding Working and Government Benefits
- Are students made aware of work incentives that allow persons to retain assistance while working?
- Are students and families connected with the Social Security Administration as a resource for questions they may have?
- Are families invited to participate in transition related open houses / job fairs?

Regarding District Facilitation and Development of Student Transition Plan:
- How are student post-school goals developed for the IEP?
- Is the student involved and encouraged to speak openly in their IEP/Transition meeting?
- Are parents actively involved in IEP/Transition planning?
- How old are students when transition planning is started? When are agencies first involved?
- To what extent is the ILP utilized as a transition planning tool?

Regarding District Policies and Procedures:
- Are transition related programs being effectively implemented?
    - Are there too few being offered?
    - Are there too many being offered that cause a lack of focus and implementation?
- Are administrators and guidance counselors trained on providing transition planning for students with IEPs?

Regarding District encouragement of student/parent self-determination and self-advocacy:
- Does the district philosophy support student centered planning?
- Does the district teach students how to participate in IEP/Transition Planning meeting?
- Does the district encourage parental involvement in the transition planning process? How does the district encourage and support parental involvement?

Suggested Activities

Regarding District Promotion of Awareness of Employment Educational Opportunities in Region:
- Consider ways to customize employment. (Customized Employment means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer.)
- Catalogue all available post-secondary education options in the region (e.g. apprenticeships, certificates).
- Collaborate with Regional Interagency Transition Team chair on reconvening and sharing with Regional Interagency Transition Team why they are needed.

Regarding District promotion of information to parents and students regarding working and government benefits:
- Involve Social Security Administration in transition planning to discuss work incentive programs.
- Involve Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in transition planning.

Regarding district facilitation of individual student transition planning:
- Teach students about transition planning and how to participate.
- Practice the IEP/Transition Planning meeting.
- Help students identify strengths, needs, and interests.
- Help students learn how to set goals, develop action plan, and monitor their own progress.
- Work with the cooperative transition consultant to train staff in utilizing the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to its fullest extent.
- Invite agencies to participate in transition planning starting at age 14. Involve parents in decisions regarding which agencies to involve.

Regarding District Policies and Procedures:
- Utilize Transition Services Inventory to identify possible services related to employment.
- Utilize Transition Services Inventory to identify possible services related to education.
- Discontinue services not being provided with fidelity; expend resources on those identified as most effective.
- Provide support for guidance counselors to receive specialized training in transition planning for students with IEPs.

Regarding District encouragement of student/parent self-determination and self-advocacy:
- Provide self-advocacy training to students.
- Work with Parent Resource Center to raise awareness among parents of post-school opportunities for employment and education. Encourage participation of parents in transition planning meetings.